AAR Policy Review

Planning Conference

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AAR POLICY REVIEW
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Participants

Field	HQUSACE
Dave Martinson POA	Tom Waters
Jim Fredericks NWD	Raleigh Leef
Terry Stratton SAD	Robyn Colosimo
Peter Blum NAD	Mark Matusiak
Diana Laird SWG	C. Lee Ware
Lester Tong SPD	Steve Cone
Les Waguespack MVD	
Sue Ferguson LRN	OASA(CW)
Doug Lamont	
Sponsor's Organizations	Mark McKevitt
Dave Sanford AAPA	
Susan Gilson NAFSMA	IWR
Kim Sega Coastal Interests	Lillian Almodovar
Mark Gmitro	
Darrell Nolton	

AAR Policy Review Workshop Goals and Objectives

- Come to a common understanding as to what a good policy review is, and
- Determine if there are some opportunities for improvements that can be made in the way we do business.

AAR Format

- What was supposed to happen?
- What did happen?
- Why did it happen?
- How will we improve the way we do it next time?

AAR – How We Did It

- Each MSC Presented Two Projects
  - Review process worked well
  - Review process did not work well
- Discussions
  - Define good review
  - What makes for good policy review
  - Opportunities for improvement
  - Recommendations

What Makes for Good Quality Review

- Comments
- Communications
- Participants
- Timeliness

COMMENTS

What constitutes good comments?

- Structure/format
  - State concerns
  - Significance of concerns
  - State basis of concern (law, guidance, common sense, state of art, etc.)
  - Explain how concern can be resolved
- Separate issues from advice
- Positive tone

COMMENTS

- Capture all pertinent policy issues
- Succinctly written
- Comments that identify/promote/ encourage opportunities
- Value added
- Avoid duplication/conflicting comments
- Well organized
- Acknowledge good work

COMMUNICATIONS

- Must be open channels
- Coordination of comments
- Timely/responsive by ALL
- Communicate when a response is expected
- Professional/respectful tone by ALL
- Effective
- Enable conflict resolution during review
- RIT managers should be reporting status of reviews and responses

PARTICIPANTS

- Led by review manager
- Review team (ITR & Policy)
- Sponsors
- ASA(CW) as appropriate
- Vertical team (RIT, MSC, PDT)
- Stakeholders
- Resource agencies

TIMELINESS

- Early involvement – front end loaded
- Early identification of possible issues
- Recognize/address/manage schedule:
  - Needs
  - Constraints
  - Changes
    - ❖Applies to Production and Review
    - ❖Realistic

AAR Policy Review Workshop
Policy Review Assumptions

- Good Policy Review Assumptions:
  - Receiving a thorough, good, quality report
  - Receiving a complete package
  - Responsive District
  - Engaged MSC/DST/RIT

*NOTE: Volume does not equal Quality

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

- ER1105-2-100, Appendix H Update
- Peer Reviewers Handbook
- Policy Task Force
- Lean Six Sigma
- Work Load Analysis
- Planners Web Page
- To be done as funds and manpower available

ER1105-2-100 Appendix H Update

- Encourage teams to communicate more frequently with shorter and smaller meetings.
- Promote better communications and relationships between field PDTs, ITR teams, HQ/MSC Policy Review team, and the ASA(CW) Policy Review team.
- Encourage more effective use of the internet.
- Advertise CWRB meetings on Planners Web Site.
- Post or provide links to Project documents that have completed the review process.
- Encourage a member(s) of the ITR team to be a part of the AFB and CWRB conferences.

ER1105-2-100 Appendix H Update

- Invite guests to attend CWRB to observe.
- Require PDTs to budget and schedule the CWRB.
- Encourage HQ Policy Reviewers to process reports consistent with schedule commitments.
- Require the HQ lead for Policy Review to Schedule the AFB with the PDT when the documentation arrives at HQ.
- Assign leaders of Policy Review at MSC (when applicable)/HQ/ASA(CW).
- Encourage more **early-on** face-to-face meetings. MSC's should stack meetings to reduce travel requirements and funding.

ER1105-2-100 Appendix H Update

- Develop a tiered review process that is commensurate with the scale of a project. Tiers would identify a level of review based on factors such as costs, interest, complexity, risk, time, gyrations/milestones (i.e., skipping AFB, some automatic approval for concurrent draft review).
- Invoke the Vertical Team and utilize checklists to help all focus on the issues. Checklists provide a key common denominator within the vertical team for reviews during Recon, FSM, AFB stages as required by ER 1105-2-100.
- Include a summary document that addresses ASA(CW) needs.

ER1105-2-100 Appendix H Update

- Issue guidance on who should sign various reports. (eg. When a sponsor prepares report or when does the MSC/HQ sign a CAP report.).
- Provide samples of AFB reports and respective PGMs.
- Develop a list of expectations for each type of report and outputs from a Policy Review.
- Link Policy review w COPs and National experts with the purpose to share knowledge.
- Existing policy review capability should be assessed. Measures to bridge gaps should be identified and undertaken.

ER1105-2-100 Appendix H Update

- Require RIT managers to report status of reviews to PDTs PM.
- Encourage project delivery teams to build trust by being more open. For example: post information immediately, be proactive and positive with all team members, look for the third option, etc.
- Develop and encourage a concurrent HQ-ASA(CW) review process on appropriate projects.

Peer Reviewers Handbook

- Develop and publish Review guides.
- Promote better communications and relationships between field PDTs, ITR teams, HQ/MSC Policy Review team, and the ASA(CW) Policy Review team.
- Promote use of available technology (Net meeting, Meeting Places, Video Streaming, Groove, etc).
- Encourage more effective use of the internet.
- Encourage member(s) of the ITR team to be a part of the AFB and CWRB conferences.
- Encourage more **early-on** face-to-face meetings. MSC’s should stack meetings to reduce travel requirements and funding.

Peer Reviewers Handbook

- Invoke the Vertical Team and utilize checklists to help all focus on the issues. Checklists provide a key common denominator within the vertical team for reviews during Recon, FSM, AFB stages as required by ER 1105-2-100.
- Develop a list of expectations for each type of report and outputs from a Policy Review.
- Encourage project delivery teams to build trust by being more open. For example: post information immediately, be proactive and positive with all team members, look for the third option, etc.

Policy Taskforce

- Eliminate Incremental Analysis on Environmental Mitigation for projects. Current policy requires both an incremental analysis and a cost effective analysis. Eliminating the Incremental Analysis method and only using the most cost effective plan for full functional replacement of significant resources method will save time and money. The policy change, if approved, would recognize the reality of what sponsors and stakeholders have supported and what has actually been recommended in most cases.

Lean Six Sigma

- Encourage HQ Policy Reviewers to process reports consistent with schedule commitments.
- Link Policy review w CoPs and National experts with the purpose to share knowledge.
- Existing policy review capability should be assessed. Measures to bridge gaps should be identified and undertaken.
- Require RIT managers to report status of reviews to PDTs PM.
- Consider a Single “Agency” Review concept with ASA(CW) and others.

Lean Six Sigma

- Create a sub team that will validate Appendix G and chart out the review process (from appendix G) on a time line so that PDT’s know when a response is expected.

Workload Analysis

- Require all RIT's to have at least one dedicated planning manager.
- Encourage RIT's to share RIT planners (opportunity to grow planners and distribute the workload).
- Consider adding additional RIT planners.
- Existing policy review capability should be assessed. Measures to bridge gaps should be identified and undertaken.
- Encourage more policy reviewers from the RIT's to visit field periodically (some policy reviewers within the RIT's are doing this).

Planners Web Page

- Produce white papers that describe the CWRB and Issue more information on CWRB expectations.
- Encourage more effective use of the internet.
- Advertise CWRB meeting on the Planners Web Site
- Post or provide links to Project documents that have completed the review process.
- Provide samples of AFB reports and respective PGMs.

To Be Addressed

- Develop a Report writing course.
- Make more use of developmental and temporary assignments to grow knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Develop a transition plan so that in the event a Policy Review person is reassigned that their responsibilities are transitioned to a new person over an appropriate period of time. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that knowledge can be preserved and transferred. Former team members should be retained to coach/mentor during transition period.

CONCLUSIONS

- This workshop was a successful face-to-face exercise in addressing the difficult issue of policy review.
- This is a work in progress and as a group remain committed….
- Begin to use these Recommendations today
- Comments are welcome and encouraged. Send to Mark.D.Gmitro@iwr01.usace.army.mil or Raleigh.H.Leef@HQ02.usace.army.mil
- We would like to acknowledge the dedicated, committed and excellent review staff and thank them for their participation and candid remarks.